

**COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
AGENDA ITEM TRANSMITTAL**

(1) DEPARTMENT Administrative Office	(2) MEETING DATE 4/8/2014	(3) CONTACT/PHONE Lisa Howe 781-5011	
(4) SUBJECT 30-day update on current drought conditions and related management actions for Board's review of the continuing need for proclamation of local emergency pursuant to Government Code section 8630. All Districts.			
(5) RECOMMENDED ACTION It is recommended that the Board receive the 30-day update on current drought conditions and related management actions establishing the need to continue the proclamation of local emergency due to drought conditions in San Luis Obispo County.			
(6) FUNDING SOURCE(S) N/A	(7) CURRENT YEAR FINANCIAL IMPACT \$0.00	(8) ANNUAL FINANCIAL IMPACT \$0.00	(9) BUDGETED? N/A
(10) AGENDA PLACEMENT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consent <input type="checkbox"/> Presentation <input type="checkbox"/> Hearing (Time Est. ____) <input type="checkbox"/> Board Business (Time Est. ____)			
(11) EXECUTED DOCUMENTS <input type="checkbox"/> Resolutions <input type="checkbox"/> Contracts <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinances <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A			
(12) OUTLINE AGREEMENT REQUISITION NUMBER (OAR) N/A		(13) BUDGET ADJUSTMENT REQUIRED? BAR ID Number: <input type="checkbox"/> 4/5 Vote Required <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A	
(14) LOCATION MAP N/A	(15) BUSINESS IMPACT STATEMENT? No	(16) AGENDA ITEM HISTORY <input type="checkbox"/> N/A Date: <u> 3/11/2014 </u>	
(17) ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE REVIEW Guy Savage			
(18) SUPERVISOR DISTRICT(S) All Districts -			

County of San Luis Obispo



TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Administrative Office / Lisa Howe
781-5011

DATE: 4/8/2014

SUBJECT: 30-day update on current drought conditions and related management actions for Board's review of the continuing need for proclamation of local emergency pursuant to Government Code section 8630. All Districts.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Board receive the 30-day update on current drought conditions and related management actions establishing the need to continue the proclamation of local emergency due to drought conditions in San Luis Obispo County.

DISCUSSION

Background

On March 11, 2014, the Board adopted a resolution proclaiming a local emergency due to drought conditions in San Luis Obispo County. Section 8630 of the California Government Code and County Code Chapter 2.80.070 (2) require that the Board of Supervisors review the need for continuing the local emergency at least every 30 days until such emergency is terminated. The Board also directed staff to return every 30 days to provide an update on the status of actions by the Drought Task Force, including a report on the analysis regarding local water conditions, local responses, conservation and outreach projects, and the State Water Project.

The Drought Task Force continues to meet to coordinate drought monitoring, impact assessments, responses to emergency health and human safety, and public communication and outreach. The task force prepared the Monthly Drought Update (Attachment 1) to inform the board on current drought conditions and related management actions, which establishes the need to continue the proclamation of local emergency due to drought conditions.

Current Conditions

The latest U.S. Drought Monitor report released March 25, 2014 indicates San Luis Obispo County remains at the D4 – Exceptional Drought intensity rating (Attachment 2). As of March 24, 2014, San Luis Obispo County has had no measurable rainfall since the March 11, 2014 proclamation of a local emergency due to drought conditions. Local reservoir levels remain significantly lower than the average percentage capacity for this time of year including: Nacimiento 22%; Lopez 56%; Salinas 38%; and Whale Rock 55%.

Statewide precipitation, snowpack and reservoir levels remain very low. According to the National Weather Service, statistical tools for the next 30 days favor below-median precipitation in the southwest for all of California (Attachment 3). As our state's rainy season nears its end, much of California has received only about 50% of normal precipitation for this rainy season. Even if it were to rain most days in April, California would remain in drought conditions due to low water supplies in reservoirs from the two previous years.

Impacts

Agricultural, fire danger and economic impacts continue to intensify. Agricultural conditions continue to deteriorate due to lack of moisture. This is especially evident for rangeland. The result of poor grazing conditions is contributing to the unusually high number of cattle that have been sold through the livestock market. Long-term impacts will be felt as ranchers wait for rangeland forage plants to rebound before rebuilding reduced herds.

This year's fire activity statewide continues to be well above the year-to-date average. Locally, fire danger remains elevated as the continuous drying of both live and dead fuels will likely lead to unprecedented dry fuel conditions for the remainder of the year or until there is significant rainfall.

If conditions continue, negative economic impacts will continue to mount. In addition to San Luis Obispo County, as of March 28, 2014, seventeen other counties have proclaimed a local emergency due to drought conditions (Attachment 4). To date, the United States Department of Agriculture has issued a secretarial disaster designation identifying 56 of 58 counties in California, and the 2 remaining counties which are contiguous counties to one or more of those designated, as primary natural disaster areas due to drought conditions (Attachment 5). This means that every county in California is now eligible to receive assistance. Farmers in these counties are eligible for low interest emergency loans and other disaster assistance programs. No information is available yet regarding impact on the labor force due to the drought conditions.

Emergency Actions

While no specific actions have been taken under the authority allowed by the Proclamation, an initial effort that may lead to such actions has taken place. The County sent a letter to the Commander of the Los Angeles District U.S. Army Corp of Engineers requesting the Corp's approval to access and construct an emergency inter-tie and extension along the Salinas pipeline. The inter-tie would be needed to obtain reserve water from Nacimiento for the Chorro Valley institutions (California Men's Colony, Camp San Luis, County Jail, County Emergency Operations Center, Cuesta College, and the County Office of Education).

Recommendation

Staff recommends that the Board review and receive the attached update, reporting on the existence of continuing drought conditions that exist in San Luis Obispo County. Review of this update by the Board fulfills the Board's duty to review the need to continue the proclamation of local emergency due to the existence of drought conditions pursuant to Government Code section 8630. No other Board action is necessary. (Note that any regulations that might issue as a result of the local emergency due to drought would be subject to Board approval, and the Local Emergency Proclamation adopted by the Board on March 11, 2014, will remain in effect until terminated by your Board.)

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT/IMPACT

At the onset of the Governor's declaration and under the direction of the County Administrative Officer, a Drought Task Force was formed. The Drought Task Force is comprised of multiple County departments, including: Administrative Office, County Office of Emergency Services, Public Works Department, County Fire, County Agricultural Commissioner, County Planning and Building, Farm Advisor, County Health Agency, and County Counsel. All member departments provided input for this report.

County OES continues to be in regular contact with the Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) to receive and provide situation status information.

The Public Works Department continues to coordinate with water purveyors and cities.

Public Health is coordinating with relevant state agencies, including the State California Department of Public Health and Emergency Medical Services Authority Health Coordination Center.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

The long-term financial impact on the local economy, including the demand on County and other legal agency services, cannot be forecast at this time. The County continues to track countywide drought related costs and will report on costs to date with future updates.

RESULTS

Accepting the update prepared by the Drought Task Force, which establishes the existence of conditions of drought, confirms the need to continue the proclamation of a local emergency. Maintaining the proclamation of local emergency will continue to allow for the Public Works Department and other agencies to take immediate actions needed by allowing temporary reduction of certain regulatory and purchasing requirements. This will also permit County staff to assist in drought-related work and tasks outside their normal scope of duties in the capacity of Disaster Service Workers under Government Code section 3100. In addition, acceptance of the update from the Task Force, confirms the continuing existence of severe drought conditions and will also serve as notice to the State of our dire conditions and a reminder to all of the serious drought conditions facing the county and state.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Monthly Drought Update
2. US Drought Monitor Map-CA
3. 1 Month Outlook Precipitation Probability
4. Local Emergency Proclamations
5. USDA Disaster Designation